

Director's Remarks, December 2010

Performance

Despite the continuing loss of foot traffic downtown (18,468 visitors this November compared to 20,740 in November 2009), the number of items circulated downtown was only 459 less than for the same month last year. This small deficit downtown was more than made up by increases in the branches. Compared to last November, we were up nearly 3,000 circulations system-wide. This increase was also enough to make our year-to-date total higher than we attained last year. Now that we are open five days a week in the branches, we almost certainly will be up for the calendar year with good prospects for an increase in circulation for the fiscal year.

Reorganization & Downtown repairs

The winning bid for roof repairs was slightly less than the amount we budgeted, leaving a little more to cover elevator costs. Danny Thornton from the City arranged for a specialist to inspect the moorings for the elevator and oversee the project. Once his test results are back, this project should be moving forward as well. Our building staff is altering shelving that will be part of the main floor display area. The primary costs remaining for the reorganization are the LED lighting for the second floor stack area, the walls for the second floor meeting rooms, whatever is done with the Internet Café, and new furniture & equipment. Including the Stong money withdrawn for this purpose and remaining reserve funds over \$1 million, we have about \$335,000 left to cover our expenses.

Resolution of the OPEB billing and the issue of retiree healthcare

We have now paid \$110,397 of the \$289,000 OPEB charge and are still under budget for the year. By paying only one quarter when we renew the Ebsco databases (new expiration date will be September 30), we can save an additional \$60,000, leaving approximately \$120,000 yet to be covered. Eileen and I expect that most if not all of this remaining balance can be addressed without affecting book orders and without dropping below \$1 million in reserves.

The Library will gain most of my budgeted salary and benefits for the remainder of the fiscal year (\$46,114). The net amount depends on what you see as a fair salary for Eva as interim director. As with Barry Bradford, she has not been in the current pay system as long as some other managers and you might want to consider giving her a higher salary more commensurate with her responsibilities. When Jane McFarland retired, she arranged for me to receive a 4% salary increase as acting director. If you do the same for Eva, her additional salary and benefits for the final six months will amount to \$1,228.38, leaving approximately \$45,000 to cover OPEB costs. Eva has requested a 10% salary increase. If you choose to do this, her additional salary and benefits will amount to approximately \$6,754, leaving \$39,360 to cover OPEB expenses.

As noted, I polled the directors of the Urban Libraries Council about retiree health coverage. Nine out of the ten responding provide this coverage. Given that we are competing with these libraries for the best professionals, that our salaries are not competitive, and that the Library is likely to be a City department again (among other departments providing retiree healthcare), it might be worthwhile maintaining this benefit.